Evolving Gender Roles Among Asian American Women and Domestic Violence

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A Project

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Division of Social Work
Abstract

of

Evolving Gender Roles Among Asian American Women and Domestic Violence

by

Mui Chi

Among Asian American households, power resides with the breadwinner. As women take on the role of breadwinner, traditional gender roles and responsibilities are thus challenged. This study involves the perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of 72 participants in respect to the impact evolving gender roles among Asian American women possess as it relates to domestic violence. Factors such as age, educational attainment, marital status, religiosity, socioeconomic status, and exposure to domestic violence were analyzed to determine the significance these factors may have in shaping participants’ view on domestic violence. Study findings revealed certain factors to influence women’s perspectives and beliefs about gender roles and responsibilities. The study further revealed the forces Asian American women are under by Eastern and Western culture to adhere to customs, values, and beliefs.

_______________________, Committee Chair
Francis Yuen, DSW

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Date

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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

Despite the prevalent nature of domestic violence across communities all over the world, it is considered a taboo to discuss the issue. Like the elephant in the room, people are aware of the problem, but are either uncomfortable or forbidden to speak about it due to their cultural or religious beliefs about the issue. However, domestic violence is an important concern that needs to be addressed due to its ability to transcend across every race, gender, socioeconomic status, and age group.

Domestic violence definitions vary, but typically, it is actual or threatened acts of physical, emotional, psychological, emotional, and spiritual violence exercised by one partner to control in an intimate relationship (Lee, 1997). Other definitions of domestic violence are broader. Yick (2001) defined domestic violence as male coercion of women. Regardless of the differences in defining domestic violence, the underlying cause of domestic violence among intimate partner relationships is when one individual chooses to inflict physical, emotional, financial, spiritual, or psychological abuse on the other partner in an effort to maintain power and control in the relationship.

During my first year of internship, I encountered many domestic violence survivors while working at Women Escaping A Violent Environment (WEAVE), a primary service provider for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in Sacramento County. Most of the survivors I worked with were unaware that violence is a learned behavior. Even when the client was aware that violence is a learned behavior, the
client often neglected to hold the abuser accountable for his actions, despite the detrimental impact the victim has incurred as a result of the abuse.

The women I worked with were fortunate enough to leave their situation. Unfortunately, for a significant number of women who suffer from abuse, the option to leave does not exist simply because her cultural and religious upbringing has conditioned her to believe that violence is a normal part of a relationship or her lack of knowledge about available resources to assist survivors. Furthermore, domestic violence is still viewed by some cultures to be a private matter and should be handled within ones’ family, which prevents women from seeking help even when there’s an awareness of available resources. In order to prevent acts of intimate partner violence from increasing, victims must be educated in recognizing abuse as a destructive force to a healthy relationship, acknowledge abuse as an unacceptable form of learned behavior while being encouraged to openly discuss the issue as to bring awareness to the problem.

**Statement of the Problem**

Statistics show that 1.5 to 3.9 million women in the United States are physically abused by their partners and 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Females who are 20-24 years of age are at the greatest risk for intimate partner violence (U.S Department of Justice, 2006). In an earlier study conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice (2005) roughly 73% of family violence victims consisted of females and approximately 84-86 % of females were victims of spousal abuse. The same report shows that of murderers, a staggering 83% murdered their spouses.
In reviewing national crime statistics, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (1998) reported that approximately 1,800 murders were attributed to intimate partners in 1996. Of those murders, 75% were female victims. Although most studies and information gathered on domestic violence were performed on heterosexual relationships, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community (LGBT) are not exempt from experiencing intimate partner violence. In 2003 alone, the LGBT community experienced 6,523 incidents of domestic violence (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2004).

Statistics on domestic violence are conservative considering intimate partner violence is often under reported because victims may not possess the knowledge necessary in recognizing the abuse. Differing definitions of abuse along with cultural interpretations and acceptance of abuse may impact a victim’s willingness to report. Furthermore, a lack of awareness and education regarding abuse contributes to a victim’s perception that violence in a relationship is a normal and acceptable form of behavior. As a result, victims may not recognize or acknowledge the abuse they experience. Even when victims acknowledge their abuse, they may minimize its severity to justify staying in the relationship.

Public perceptions of domestic violence view it as a form of marital conflict; however, it is far more complex. Acts of intimate partner violence exerts damaging effects on victims, families, and communities. Intimate partner violence has the potential to cause serious mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial harm to the victim, and even death. Statistics continually show an increase in occurrence of violence among intimate partners; yet the severity of the issue is still minimized. Part of the problem
stems from a lack of awareness that society consists of direct and indirect acts of oppression against women while promoting power among men. These built in acts of oppression are common in the Asian culture in which males are valued and praised while women are viewed as subordinates for the purpose of childbearing. Cultural beliefs held by members of Asian American communities regarding traditional gender roles creates an environment that is more susceptible to violence, especially when violence is viewed as an acceptable method for males to maintain power in a relationship.

Considering the history of Asian Americans families’ breadwinner were males, male batterers often justified their violence towards their wife as a right afforded to them because they were the sole provider of the family. Due to the economic climate present in America and around the world, an increased number of women are entering the workforce and have become the sole financial provider for her family. This change in gender role and responsibilities possesses the capability to alter the dynamics of the Asian American family along with cultural values, perceptions, and religious beliefs about domestic violence.

**Significance of the Study**

Studies about domestic violence have increased over the years as researchers and the public begin to recognize how widespread violence among intimate partners are in communities around the world. Even with the amount of research that has been performed on the subject matter, there is a dire need for research regarding the impact evolving gender roles and responsibilities may create for Asian American women in intimate partner relationships.
The amount of literature on domestic violence has often been focused on other ethnic groups. Although the emotional, psychological and physical consequences of domestic violence are similar despite the ethnic background of the victim, the experiences and perceptions of domestic violence among Asian American women may differ from other ethnic groups due to cultural beliefs, acculturation, educational attainment, religious affiliation, and socioeconomic status of the victim. Moreover, Asian American communities’ emphasis on collectivism adds a complex dimension to the experiences Asian American victims of intimate partner violence endure.

It is common knowledge among domestic violence advocates that male batterers typically use violence to assert power and control over their partners. The aim of this study is to explore the impact challenges to traditional gender roles may pose within intimate partner relationships. By understanding the changes in gender roles among the Asian American population, researchers can develop appropriate programs to assist batterers and victims to cope with changes in gender roles that are not aligned with the traditional roles and responsibilities that Asian Americans have been accustomed to. Furthermore, an understanding about how traditional gender roles are evolving will allow Asian Americans to recognize the impact adherence to traditional gender roles may have on their relationships.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study will assist in providing a better understanding of domestic violence; specifically the impact changing gender roles may have on dynamics within an intimate partner relationship. The research will provide a look into public perceptions regarding
gender roles and responsibilities as well as attitudes toward domestic violence in order to assess whether socioeconomic status, educational attainment, acculturation status, age, religiosity, and marital status may have an impact on an individual’s attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about domestic violence.

Since domestic violence is a result of power imbalance, I hypothesize that evolving gender roles among Asian American women will not lead to a decrease in domestic violence among Asian American communities. I hypothesize that occurrences of intimate partner violence will increase as a result of assertions by males to maintain power and control in the relationship. As Asian American women become acculturated to Western beliefs, males will resort to violence as a means to reassert control and adherence to traditional gender assumptions.

**Theoretical Framework**

An array of theoretical frameworks has attempted to explain the cause of domestic violence. Theoretical frameworks that have been used to explain intimate partner violence consist of feminist theory, status inconsistency, culture of violence theory, evolutionary theory, biological, societal structure along with numerous others. Researchers have yet to identify or agree on a particular theory to explain domestic violence, which is understandable considering the complex nature of domestic violence. Researchers typically select theories based upon their own perceptions as to the cause of violence. For this particular study, the social learning framework will be utilized to gain a greater understanding of what drives one to commit domestic violence.
“Social learning theory is one of the most popular explanatory perspectives in the marital violence literature” Mihalic and Elliot (1997, p. 21). Social learning was developed by Albert Bandura to explain the role that violence play in relationships. According to Albert Bandura (1973), violence is a learned behavior. Bandura explained that people model behaviors they have been exposed to as a child. Children who witness or experience violence as a child internalize their observations and develop inadequate coping strategies for handling stress and conflict. Social learning theorists believes that if “the family of origin handled stress and frustrations with anger and aggression, the child who has grown up in such an environment is at greater risk for exhibiting those behaviors, witnessed or experienced, as an adult” (Mihalic & Elliott, 1997, p. 21).

Moreover, men and women develop their concept of self through socialization by their parents and environment. In traditional Asian American families where males act as dominant figures in the home while females are considered second-class citizens, children learn the importance of their role within the family. When those children become adults, they perform the roles they have been conditioned to believe and value.

**Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following terms will be defined as follows:

*Asian or Asian American* are used to represent the diversity within the Asian communities and are synonymous.

*Domestic violence* can be defined as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or
psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010). The term domestic violence, intimate partner violence, or woman abuse will be used interchangeably in this study.

*Abuser* is an individual who engage in acts of domestic violence. The terms batterer and perpetrator will be used synonymously in this study.

*Acculturation* refers to the adjustment process that takes place as an individual adapts to a new culture. This process involves an evolving relationship to traditional values and beliefs through exposure to the dominant culture (Ho, 1990 as cited in Kasturirangan et al. 2004, p. 323).

*Acculturative Stress* refers to the range of economic, familial, social and cultural stressors immigrants experience as they adapt to a new homeland (Smart & Smart, 1995).

*Culture* consists of shared patterns of values and behaviors that characterize a particular group (Winkelman, 2001). It is “shaped by values, beliefs, norms, and practices that are shared by members of the same cultural group” (Giger & Davidhizar, 2001, p. 113).

*Face* refers to the social and moral status that an individual or family has achieved. Face can be lost and acquired through social interactions.

*Internalization* is the process where an individual comes to believe external norms and stereotypes about themselves.
Normalization is the process in which an individual, through socialization believes certain behaviors or circumstances are normal and an accepted part of life.

Patriarchy refers to a set of ideas and beliefs that justify male domination over women in society. Patriarchy is found globally, but differ across regions and culture (Ahmad, Riaz, Barata, & Stewart, 2004, p. 262).

Traditional Gender Role is the perception of how men and women are supposed to think and behave in society and within the context of heterosexual relationships (Santana, Raj, Decker, Marche, & Silverman, 2006, p. 576).

Victim or survivor refers to an individual who is or was previously involved in an abusive relationship.

Assumptions

This study stands on the assumption that domestic violence is a social issue of particular concern for Asian American communities due to Asian Americans’ reluctance in acknowledging and discussing the issue publicly. As a result, there exist an underutilization of domestic violence resources despite its availability.

Despite increase occurrences of intimate partner violence among Asian Americans, there are cultural pressures to have the issue remain a private matter that should be dealt within the family. In turn, domestic violence continues to permeate throughout communities nationally and globally. If the issue on intimate partner violence is to decrease, Asian Americans must be prepared to acknowledge and discuss the issue. Communities must work together to advocate rather than ostracize and blame victims. Additionally, perpetrators of violence must be held accountable for their actions.
**Justification**

The goal of the social work profession is to assist the most vulnerable members of society. This requires providing clients with the appropriate resources. However, in order to ascertain what resources clients may benefit from having, the social work profession must identify and understand the presenting issues marginalized individuals encounter. My research will benefit the profession of social work because by providing increased information to better understand the attitudes and beliefs of Asian American women toward traditional gender roles and how those attitudes and beliefs impact women’s perceptions in regard to gender based acts of violence. A better understanding of perceptions of Asian American women toward domestic violence will allow helping professionals to adapt and develop more culturally sensitive and effective prevention efforts and treatment strategies.

**Limitations**

On account that this research is based on collecting information from 60 Asian American women between the ages of 18-35, the information gathered may ineffectively represent the general population. Being that the identified population for the study is Asian American women, the outcomes of the study may not be applicable to other ethnic populations, despite some commonalities victims of intimate partner violence may share. In addition, participants were recruited on university premises with access to computers, which excluded potential participants without access from participating.

Another limitation of this study involves the instrument for data collection. The scope of the survey was to determine the perceptions of participants rather than personal
experiences. Clearly, perceptions towards domestic violence depend on various presenting factors other than personal experiences, such as environmental factors and socialization. Moreover, considering the sensitivity of the topic and the researcher’s intent to recruit the intended sample population and size, a snowball sampling strategy was exercised. In turn, participants’ responses may not necessarily represent participants with access to California State University, Sacramento or reside in Sacramento County.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Domestic violence incidences in the Asian community have gradually gained recognition with reports of incidences being reported to law enforcement. However, there is still a huge under reporting by victims partly due to a culture in which gender roles are strictly enforced and adhered to by members. With the downturn of the economy, Asian American women are forced to enter the workforce in order to financially support for her family, which challenges the traditional gender roles instilled upon males and females at inception. The literature review examines the changing gender roles of Asian American women and attitudes about domestic violence. Particular attention will be paid to identifying culturally specific factors influencing gender formation, perceptions, and domestic violence. Furthermore, the role of Social Learning Theory in explaining domestic violence along with the detrimental health impact of domestic violence on victims will be reviewed.

Face and Gender Socialization

Chan (2006) conducted a study regarding the Chinese concept of face and violence against women in Hong Kong. The results proved that Chinese batterers often held traditional beliefs regarding gender roles. Thus, batterers consistently attempted to achieve self-sufficiency and personal expectations in order to gain acceptance and praise from others around him. However, with the modernization of Hong Kong society in which women are entering the work force and becoming financially independent, Chinese men are encountering difficulties in coping with challenges to traditional gender roles. As
one participant stated, “To rely on wives’ financial support is very shameful to many Chinese men. They are no longer competent and thus experience a loss of status in their families” (p. 71). Chan’s study goes to further show the impact of face among Chinese male batters. Generally speaking, “the stronger the face orientation, the greater the masculine gender role stress and thus the greater likelihood of using violence against female partners.” Essentially, face orientation is equivalent to status in the Asian American community.

A loss of status in the family typically means a loss of status and respect with the community. Not only does a man question his abilities to be a provider for his family, his community is also questioning his capability and ability to adhere to the traditional gender roles set forth by the culture. Even if the male is supportive of his wife’s role as the breadwinner of the family, if the community still adheres to traditional gender roles, his role as the dominant figure in the family remains in question from the perspective of the Asian community.

For batterers, losing face can be embarrassing and traumatic (Chan, 2006). Losing face may additionally result in anger and shame, which can lead to violence. Batterers are often reluctant to seek help because of face orientation and acknowledging themselves as batterers. Edleson (1996) indicated that approximately one third to one half of male batterers terminate their participation in treatment programs prematurely, which explains the difficult nature of treating batterers.

Baker (2001) examined help seeking behaviors among men in relation to health services and found that men were reluctant to visit institutional health services. If men are
hesitating to seek health services, it’s unlikely they will visit facilities to discuss an incriminating topic like domestic violence. For this reason, the perpetuation of domestic violence will continue, as abusers will not seek out services for fear of losing face.

If batterers are educated and learn to recognize the impact of face orientation on their daily lives and the events that may lead to a loss of face, they are better equipped to detect the early signs of losing their tempers and violent behavior. On the other hand, educating batterers on the early warning signs of abuse may not resolve the issues of violence within their relationships as men and women have been socialized to engage in gender specific roles by familial, societal, and environment factors.

Domestic violence among Asian American communities proves to be challenging due to the high level of secretiveness and fear among its members (Sheehan, Javier, & Thanjan, 2000). Asian American women are constantly reminded to maintain the family’s reputation and image. Speaking out about the abuse present in a relationship would jeopardize and bring shame to the family’s reputation in the community. Disclosing family matters is taboo and is viewed as an act of betrayal upon one’s family (Lee, 2000; Bent-Goodley, 2007).

For fear of bringing shame to the family, Asian American victims subject themselves to suffer in silence. The fear of jeopardizing the family’s namesake coupled with a lack of social support and resources does not allow Asian American victims of intimate partner violence much options in terms of speaking out about the abuse or leave the unhealthy relationship.
Additionally, Asian American women have been conditioned by generations before them about the importance of maintaining face in public. It’s extremely difficult for women to challenge traditional rules without experiencing fear, guilt, and other emotions. Women who challenge traditional norms will likely experience hostility from other family and community members, along with guilt for not adhering to the beliefs of their culture.

**Traditional Gender Roles and Patriarchy**

There are numerous factors that have been presented over the years by researchers in an effort to explain domestic violence. It’s difficult to discuss domestic violence without discussing the role of gender and patriarchy influences on domestic violence perceptions. Individuals who maintained higher adherence to traditional gender roles had more impaired judgments toward domestic violence (LaBine, 2000). An explanation could be that traditional gender roles and patriarchy influence what men and women consider normal. In the Asian culture, there is a strong emphasis on hierarchal family structures and rigid gender roles. Men are expected to be dominant, assertive, and capable. Women, on the other hand, are expected to be passive, obedient, and dependent. As individuals incorporate cultural gender expectations into their beliefs, they begin to operate within the confines of the expectations.

Findings from several studies confirm a negative association between domestic violence and strict adherence to gender roles (Gustafson, 2005; Taylor & Sorenson, 2005; Berkel, Vandiver, & Bahner, 2004; Yamawaki & Tschanz, 2005). In reviewing literature on gender and aggression, Richardson and Hammock (2007) noticed that gender
differences in aggressive behavior might be the result of an individual’s response to gender role.

In an examination of traditional gender roles on domestic violence perceptions between Japanese and American college students, Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown (2009) recruited 101 non-Asian American students. The study consisted of 45 men and 56 women from an undergraduate psychology department of a private university in Utah. For Japanese participants, a total of 103 were recruited and consisted of 46 men and 57 women. Japanese participants were recruited from an undergraduate education department at a private university in Japan. For both American and Japanese students, similar patterns in marital status were detected. Of the Japanese participants, only 3% were married compared to 7% of Americans. The average age for Japanese participants was 20.7, which is similar to the mean age for American participants at 20.5.

Based on fictitious domestic violence scenario, participants were asked to complete the perceived seriousness of violence measure, the victim-blame attribution measure, the excuse-perpetrator measure, the Ambivalent Sexism inventory, the Sex-Role Ideology scale, and a demographic survey. Participants were informed the purpose of the study was to examine their response to the way couples solved their conflict. Evidence from the study indicates a strong association between traditional gender roles and domestic violence perceptions. In both the United States and Japan, attitudes toward intimate partner violence were associated with traditional gender roles.

In both groups, participants’ perceptions regarding severity of domestic violence were dependent upon severity and frequency of the injury. Participants were “less
inclined to view a one time incident as serious, as long as injury did not occur” (p. 1138). With domestic violence, each occurrence or act of violence should be taken seriously because violence has the ability to impact victims emotionally, psychologically, physically, spiritually, and financially.

A study conducted by Lane and Knowles (2002) attempt to explain participants’ perceptions regarding the severity of domestic violence. Individuals may base the severity of a woman’s experience with violence on the types and visibility of injuries sustained. Researchers from this study asserted that a single occurrence of violence is not deemed serious when compared to repeated occurrences of abuse because participants perceive frequent incidents of abuse to the intention of the perpetrator to harm the victim rather than an accident.

Further findings from the study indicate men were more inclined than women when it came to blaming victims. It could be that men are reluctant to acknowledge and take accountability for acts of violence, even when they aren’t the ones committing the crime whereas women may be more sympathetic to the victims. Women may also engage less in victim blaming because of the understanding that females are typically at a disadvantage when it comes to physical strength in comparison to men. Thus, when men choose to utilize their physical advantage to assert power and control, women are less susceptible to blame victims for not defending themselves and hold the abuser accountable instead.

Whether individuals engage in victim blaming is dependent on a myriad of factors. It’s difficult to pinpoint one particular cause. Conversely, the same reasons why
women may not engage in victim blaming are the same reasons why women may participate in victim blaming. Usually, women who fear becoming a victim of violence are more prone to victim blaming. These women reason that victims encounter abuse for violating ascribed gender roles and behaviors. Women that engage in victim blaming as a result of their own fears are under the false notion that victims can prevent perpetrators from engaging in acts of violence; when in reality, the only person that can prevent acts of violence from occurring are the perpetrators themselves (Schimel, Pyszczynski, Greenberg, O’Mahen, & Arndt, 2000).

**Cultural Influence on Domestic Violence Perceptions**

Culture is a crucial and important component of a community. Culture consists of shared patterns of values and behaviors that characterize a particular group (Winkelman, 2001) and is often “shaped by values, beliefs, norms, and practices that are shared by members of the same cultural groups” (Giger & Davidhizar, 2001, p. 113). Culture is passed down from one generation to the next and might include teachings about a shared heritage, language, style of dress, or food (Yoshihama, 2000). According to Kasturirangan et. al. (2004, p. 319), culture is not a static phenomenon. Individuals interact with their culture so that the culture is consistently challenged and redefined. Since some cultural values are formed at different times, the culture may contain conflicting elements; especially when values of the past are no longer believed or perceived to be relevant in the present.

Culture serves the purpose of maintaining order among its members. When an Asian American woman leaves her abusive relationship, she is challenging the culture in
which she belongs. For many Asian American women, there is a lack of awareness that the Asian culture consist of built in acts of oppression of women while promoting power among men. These built in acts of oppression in the Asian culture typically foster an environment in which violence may flourish. Even if the acts do not condone violence within the community, efforts are not being put forth to prevent it either.

An individual’s cultural identification plays an important factor in determining how an individual view themselves and the world around them. Without consciously knowing, people “use culture as a lens through which they interpret their daily experiences” (Kasturirangan, Krishnan, & Riger, 2004, p. 321). Therefore, how people perceive domestic violence stem from the cultural lens being utilized. If an Asian American woman’s cultural lens view domestic violence as an appropriate norm of behavior, it may be difficult for her to recognize or acknowledge her abuse, despite all the evidence.

Intimate partner violence is a social concern impacting every society in existence; yet not every community perceives violence within relationships to be a problem. According to Yuen and Barranti (2007, p. 47) “In some Asian cultures, the terms ‘battering’ and ‘abuse’ do not exist and domestic violence is perceived as ‘expected marital conflicts’ and a ‘normal part of marriage.’” Thus, when a woman experiences violence at home, she may minimize the abuse and view abuse as a normative part of a relationship. When abusive behavior is normalized, the victim may develop a belief that abuse is an acceptable form of behavior and refuse to acknowledge the severity of abuse
she experiences. A lack of acknowledgment of a problem only further fuel the problem because the first step in combating a problem is to acknowledge it.

**Cultural Orientation**

Cultural orientation is influenced by an individual’s environment (Phinney, 2003; Ying, Han, & Wong, 2008). Studies on ethnic orientation supports the notion that minorities who reside in ethnically dense communities are more likely to possess a stronger ethnic orientation. In an examination of 15 immigrant groups in New York and Los Angeles, Logan, Zhang, and Alba (2002) discovered residents in ethnically dense communities were less fluent in English.

Locations with dense populations of ethnic minorities may act as a barrier from assimilating. Asian Americans living in a homogenous community may reduce their likelihood of being impacted by dominant Western culture. For Asian Americans, communities with high ethnic orientation can alleviate the fears and anxiety that accompany immigration. In this environment, Asian American immigrants are able to communicate with others within their community. However, environments with high ethnic orientation are susceptible to domestic violence, because locations with high ethnic orientation are resistant to adopting values and beliefs that are not consistent with their traditional values and beliefs.

**Confucian Philosophy and Domestic Violence**

Asian culture is heavily influenced and guided by Confucian philosophy, which follow a hierarchal system where power is distributed based upon a person’s age and gender. Older adult males are invested with power and authority while women are
typically perceived as subordinates. As Bui and Morash (1999) stated “Confucian
principles set up the social hierarchy and define attitudes appropriate for each member in
the society” (p.775). Each member of the family is expected to conform to their specified
role within the family. Respect and interdependence among family members is highly
valued, and preservation of family is extremely important because of the cultural value
placed upon family.

From inception to death, a woman’s purpose in life is that of a caretaker. Males
are considered authority figures while females are considered and expected to be
subservient, docile, and obedient with little or no power. According to a Confucian
saying regarding the three pathways of a woman “In her youth, she must follow her
father. In her adulthood, she must follow her husband. In her later years, she must follow
her oldest son” (Shon & Ja, 1982, p. 211). The term “follow” is indicative of the role that
a female in Asian culture possess. Instead of autonomy, Asian females are considered a
liability. She must go, depending on her life stage, where the male goes since she is
dependent on him for support. At no point in a woman’s life does she have agency; the
autonomy that men are afforded during her lifetime.

Essentially, Asian women sacrifice individualism and freedom for the greater
good of her family. Her ability or inability to take care of the needs of her family is
representative of her role as a wife, mother, and daughter in-law. Thus, if she is
unsuccessful in performing her role within the family, her entire family’s status within
the community is called into question.
Asian women who deviate from cultural expectations may suffer rejection from the community, friends, and family (Yoshihama, 2000; Yoshioka & Dang, 2000). Moreover, fears of being ostracized coupled with the fear of bringing shame to one’s family are major deterrents to the helping seeking behaviors of women (Thomas, 2000; Yoshioka & Dang, 2000). In order to put the fears of Asian women in perspective; most choose to sacrifice their safety and lives by remaining in an abusive relationship rather than experience social rejection by members of their community, family, and friends.

The Asian community’s hesitation to acknowledge domestic violence as a problem prevents victims from speaking out about their abuse and seek appropriate resources for assistance. Batterers and victims who do not seek help for their issues continue to perpetuate the problems because children who grow up in homes where violence occurs are likely to develop an acceptance of violence in a relationship later in life, unless the batterer or victim elect to break the cycle of violence.

**Family Structure**

Asian Americans’ concept of family typically included a multigenerational household. The structure of the family can act as a deterrent to abuse as well as a factor contributing to the abuse women experiences. For many women, living in multigenerational families may provide emotional support, childcare and protection (Sharma, 2001; Kasturirangan, Krishnan, & Riger, 2004; Lee, & Hadeed, 2009). According to Ho (1990), the constant presence of family members reduces the likelihood that a woman may become isolated by her abuser; which are often the case in domestic violence relationships. The fact that women are not isolated in a domestic violence
relationship is important, because the social interaction she has with other members of the family is her only means of interaction and support. Victims may draw from the interaction and gain strength to cope with the abuse if she is unable to leave the abuser.

In a culture where respect for one’s elders is a core value, elders in the home may serve as monitors of abuse and serve as advocates for the abused. On the other hand, the presence of other family members may serve as contributing factors to abuse. Lee (200) found that in China, mothers-in-law may attain power in the family due to their association with the male figure in the home and will often exacerbate their son’s abusive behaviors or become abusers themselves. Victims in these circumstances may feel socially isolated and resort to suicide as a means to escape from their abuser because the act of leaving is difficult when there is no emotional support from inside the home.

Moreover, even when a woman has gathered the courage to leave the abusive relationship, she may not execute her plan to do so to the full extent if there are children involved. Acevedo’s (2000) study on contributing factors in a woman’s decision to stay or leave an abusive relationship found that among Mexican women, children were the single most important factor in deciding whether to leave or stay. For the women in the study, and domestic violence victims in general, the decision to remain in the abusive relationship for the sake of the children is one that is most often made. Women are afraid that if they leave the relationship, the abuser will inflict physical, emotional and psychological harm on the children. In an effort to decrease the psychological and economic effects on their children, women often subject themselves to remain in the abusive relationship.
For a majority of abusers, children are often used against their victims to regain control in the relationship when a woman threatens or decides to leave. If a woman leaves her abusive relationship and does not take her children with her, she is criticized about her skills as a mother and the guilt and fear that her decision to leave will have a negative impact on her children’s well being. Meanwhile, if she leaves and takes her children with her, she may have to deal with the legal system if she shares custody of the children with the abuser.

**Social Learning Theory of Domestic Violence**

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine the correlation between exposure to violence and intimate partner violence. Rahmatian (2009) conducted a study with 25 men from a batterers’ intervention group and 9 women from a victim’s crisis intervention program called the Center Against Spousal Abuse (CASA). Rahmatian’s (2009, p. 65) study surveyed participants’ exposure to domestic violence in the family. Participants were provided with a questionnaire consisting of 20 closed-ended questions and 1 open-ended question. The questions comprised of demographic information in addition to questions pertaining to a participant’s prior exposure to domestic violence within the family.

The study revealed that domestic violence occurred at a higher rate in intimate relationships regardless whether it was the offender or victim that was exposed to violence in their lives when compared to people who have not had prior exposure to domestic violence. Of the 9 female participants surveyed, 6 (67%) indicated exposure to domestic violence as a juvenile while 3 (34%) was exposed to domestic violence as an
adult. Of the 25 male offenders, 18 (72%) had been previously exposed to domestic violence as a juvenile while the remaining 7 (28%) indicated their first exposure was as an adult. Despite the huge gap among participants, the largest income category reported was among victims. Victims reported earning less than $10,000 annually. Income disparities between offenders and victims may be due to gender-based salary or the disruption in employment victims often endure as a result of domestic violence.

The National Family Violence Survey (NFVS) performed by Straus (1990) found that child abuse rates were higher among husbands who were violent toward their wives as opposed to nonviolent husbands. Not surprisingly, the NFVS study revealed a strong association between violent husbands who were child witnesses to violence. Moreover, in another study, Straus and Smith (1990) found that intimate partners who were verbally abusive to each other were twice as likely to abuse their children.

Intimate partners who engage in acts of violence are likely to view violence as normative behavior and a coping strategy for resolving issues without realizing the detrimental impact acts of violence may have on children in later life. The effects of witnessing or experiencing violence are greater for males than females (Markowitz, 2001). In other words, boys are more likely to grow up to condone and to perpetrate violence against women having witnessed or experienced violence as a child (Flood & Pease, 2009). Such patterns among boys lend support to a social learning theory of domestic violence. Through witnessing the use of violence by one parent against another, males may learn that violence is an effective and appropriate instrumental strategy (Heise, 1998).
Hines and Saudino (2002, p. 213) explained, “An individual’s family of origin can model two forms of violence through exposure (witnessing) to abuse or being abused.” Either forms of exposure will make a child more susceptible to become victims or perpetrators of violence as exposure to violence may reinforce the idea that violence is an appropriate behavior rather than an ineffective way of communication.

In an effort to further examine the significance of early exposure to violence with tendencies to commit violence, Benda and Corwyn (2002) conducted a study among adolescent boys between 13-18 years of age. Results of the study support the theory that early exposure to abuse is a strong indicator of violence, especially among youth between 16-18 years of age. Moreover, Skuja and Halford (2004) performed their study with 60 couples. Half of the couples were exposed to violence while the other half were not. Results revealed exposed couples were more aggressive in responses to conflicts in comparison to couples that were not exposed.

Based upon the studies presented, it is difficult to discount the significant impact early exposure may have on an individual’s susceptibility to commit violent acts as an adult. Children grow up to adopt beliefs and behaviors through observations and messages they receive from their family, peers, environment, and society. Through repeated exposure, these messages become ingrained. Typically, in Asian American cultures, male children learn to value their gender identity and the responsibilities associated with one’s gender.

It’s not abnormal for male children to learn from other male figures in their lives to utilize physical and verbal violence when their role within the family is being
challenged. In a way, violence is taught as a strategy to reassert power and control when necessary. These messages reinforce violence as an appropriate form of behavior when there are clearly better coping strategies. With repeated exposure, children learn to use violence as a coping mechanism for handling stress and encounter problems as they mature. However, not all Asian American males possess the belief that violence is acceptable behavior for resolving conflicts or maintaining traditional patriarchal authority.

Children that grow up in an environment where adult male figures model non-violent behaviors toward women are less likely to engage in violent acts against women. Therefore, violent tendencies among Asian American men toward women is semi dependent on environmental conditioning along with contributing factors such as the perpetrator’s personality and attitude towards women. Perpetrators who engage in victim blaming are prone to minimize and justify acts of violence as conditioned and modeled to them by authority figures in their environment. Typically, children who are exposed to violence have a greater disposition for engaging in acts of violence as an adult, but personality of the individual can influence whether the individual will endorse violence. Individuals are presented with the choice to conduct themselves in a manner that is aligned with their values and beliefs. Individuals who choose not to endorse gender imbalance are less likely to promote behaviors that serve the purpose of perpetuating the problem.

Contrary to social learning, Sellers, Cochran, and Branch (2005) found no link between victimization as a child and the perpetration of violence. Exposure to domestic
violence as a child does not necessarily contribute to an individual’s susceptibility to commit violence. De Judicibus and McCabe (2001) explained that prior experiences of violence can lead to diverse attitudinal formations, both violence-supportive and violence-intolerant. Adults who witnessed violence as a child may internalize their experiences differently. Therefore, not all individuals who experienced violence during their childhood will engage in acts of violence in later life as an individual’s age, education attainment and socioeconomic status play a role in attitudinal formations toward domestic violence (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980).

**Poverty**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (1999) showed women make approximately 76.7 cents for every $1 a man makes despite performing the same occupational duties as men. Despite decade old statistics, income disparities between men and women have not changed significantly. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010, p.1) released their findings on women’s earnings for 2009. Findings revealed that despite a decrease in earning gap between men and women for most age groups from 1979 to 2009, women are still earning less than their male counterparts.

The women’s to men’s earnings ratio among 25 to 34-year-olds increased from 68 percent in 1979 to 89 percent in 2009. Among 16 to 24 year olds, women earned 93% as much as men. Albeit a decrease in earnings gap between women and men over the years, income disparity exists and often affects women in abusive relationships. With income disparities, women that possess full-time employment may still be dependent on their significant other for financial support due to gender-based differentials in salary.
Although the gap in earnings between men and women may appear insignificant and minimal, its impact on women suffering from domestic abuse is paramount.

The National Center for Law and Economic Justice (NCLEJ) (2010) reported that in the year before, nearly 5 million more women than men lived in poverty according to the government’s definition of poverty. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) (2010) defines poverty based upon an individual’s income and family size. For a single household, the poverty threshold is $10,830. Based upon NCLEJ’s statistic and USDHHS’s definition of poverty, it could be concluded that income disparity exists between men and women considering there were 2 million more men than women in 2002 according to the U.S. Census (Census, 2003).

Bachman and Saltzman (1995) reported that women with a family income less than $10,000 were 4 times more likely to experience abuse than women with higher incomes. Further research affirmed the impact of socioeconomic status on women’s susceptibility to experience abuse. Carlson, Harris, and Holden (1999) examined 210 women who had obtained restraining orders. The results showed the significance of repeat abuse occurrences among women in low socioeconomic status. Sutherland, Sullivan and Bybee’s (2001) study on the impact of poverty on women’s health affirmed the strong association between poverty and the level of abuse women experience. The association of poverty with intimate partner violence is not surprising considering women who live in poverty are more likely to encounter stress related to daily living of trying to make ends meet with little income; in addition to a lack of awareness and accessibility to resources.
Alvi, Schwartz, DeKeseredy, and Bachaus (2005) examined the attitudes of impoverished women regarding abuse and victimization. The study compared African Americans, Caucasians, and Hmong women. Results show no major differences in the level of victimization among the three ethnic groups existed; however, prior research indicated higher rates of violence for minorities than for Caucasians (Hien & Bukszpan, 1999). High rates of intimate partner violence among minorities may be influenced by minority women’s lack of financial resources, language barriers to seeking services, or increased violence acceptance.

Poverty alone is not a cause for violence, but it contributes to the complexities of violence among intimate partners. Bent-Goodley (2007) revealed minority women were more likely than Caucasian women to experience poverty. A lack of resources can create issues for women experiencing intimate partner violence (Sutherland et. al., 2002; Williams & Mickelson, 2004). Women living in poverty do not have the financial resources necessary to leave the abusive relationship even when the desire to leave is present.

For survivors of intimate partner violence, the road to financial independence can be an arduous one. Byrne, Resnick, Kilpatrick, Best, and Saunders (1999) reported higher risks of unemployment among women who experience abuse. The reason could be contributed to interference and sabotage from abusers when survivors attempt to obtain or retain employment (Tsesis, 1996). In turn, in spite of a survivor’s desire to leave her abusive relationship, economic dependence on the abuser act as a major stumbling block (Barnett, 2000, p. 350). Granted women work full-time jobs, if salaries afforded to
women are not equivalent to those of men, economic dependence on men will continue to occur. Women who are not economically secure will continue to be at-risk for abuse as a result of not having financial resources to meet basic needs.

Higher rates of violence experienced by minority women may be due in part to acculturation issues, language acquisition, consequences of early marriage, and a lack of support and resources (Jau, 1999). With today’s economic climate, resources in the community are limited. For women who are in an abusive relationship and living in poverty, the decision to leave or remain in an abusive relationship is extremely complicated. Even if a woman is able to leave her abusive relationship, she may still encounter issues related to obtaining shelter, food, and additional requirements for survival. Women living in poverty possess limited access to quality services and resources than women with financial resources (Bent-Goodley, 2007). In turn, minority women are at greater risk for experiencing intimate partner violence, in addition to increased duration in a violent relationship.

**Acculturation, Stress, and Domestic Violence**

For Asian American immigrants who are adjusting to a new country with different values and language than their own, the stress in adapting can increase a family’s susceptibility to engage in violence, especially if the role of primary financial provider is taken over by the women. Since violence is an act of power and control, an immigrant woman’s role as the breadwinner of the family may cause her husband to feel emasculated. As a result, the husband may resort to violence as a means to reestablish his role in the family (Lee, 2000).
As demonstrated by Kim and Sung’s (2000) study, husbands who experienced higher levels of stress had a greater rate of assaulting their wives. The study also indicated a strong tendency towards violence among male dominated couples. This could be contributed to rigid adherence to traditional gender roles.

Thornton et al. (2005, p. 963) interviewed 43 Vietnamese women to examine access to and satisfaction with domestic violence services for female survivors. Seventy-six percent of participants had an annual income of less than $10,000 with 90% reporting income of less than $20,000. Roughly half of the participants reported having received services for domestic violence while the other half reported never receiving or sought out services for domestic violence. A common theme among participants was a lack of awareness within their community regarding domestic violence. Participants of the study conceptualized intimate partner violence as martial conflicts rather than domestic violence. Domestic violence, according to participants, is a direct result of “migration to the United States and the acculturation process” (p. 966).

For Asian American women, the changing gender dynamics that are the result of integration into the U.S. may increase their encounters with domestic violence. In traditional Asian American families where men are dominant figures in the home, integration into Western society pose a threat to traditional gender roles and responsibilities. Western culture contains elements typically seen in patriarchal societies such as direct and indirect messages of oppression toward women. On the other hand, Western culture also contains messages of empowerment and organizations to fight for gender equality.
Through assimilation to Western society, Asian American women begin to adopt an egalitarian viewpoint of gender expectations. As Asian American become more independent and develop ways to access opportunities, they become self-sufficient and empowered to challenge traditional gender roles. Asian American women’s efforts to assimilate into the dominant culture increases their chances of experiencing abuse, especially when their husbands are resistant to adapting Western ideologies of egalitarianism (Raj & Silverman, 2002; Kasturirangan, Krishnan, & Riger, 2004, Lee & Hadeed, 2009).

A combination of factors may increase an individual’s susceptibility to violence depending on the coping mechanisms an individual may have developed to combat stressors of daily living. When stressors of daily living are compounded with the stressors of adapting to an entirely different culture as many Asian immigrant families encounter, the combination can be overwhelming. In an effort to adapt, Asian immigrants may discover a discrepancy between their cultural beliefs and values than those of the host country. Therefore, to prevent the perpetuation of violence, Asian American communities must adapt more non-violent strategies for dealing with stress.

**Education and Domestic Violence**

Kim-Goh and Baello (2008) conducted a study among Korean and Vietnamese immigrant communities to examine the effects of gender, ethnicity, acculturation level, age, and education among the targeted sampling population to determine domestic violence perceptions. The study found “men, as well as those who were less acculturated and less educated were more likely to endorse pro-violence attitudes.” Results from Kim-
Goh and Baello’s study are consistent with previous research examining the relationship between education level and attitudes toward intimate partner violence (Bui & Morash, 1999; Yoshioka, Ullah, & DiNoia, 2001).

Education is an important aspect for bringing awareness to the problem. Asian American immigrants who “participated in English as a second language (ESL) classes and social and/or educational encounters that facilitate newcomers’ adjustment to their new cultural setting” (Thornton et al., 2005) learned to recognize abuse. The ability to recognize abuse is instrumental for women to realize that marital violence is not an acceptable form of behavior within a relationship in an effort to break the intergenerational violence approved mentality that Asian Americans have held for countless years.

Education is a crucial component for victims of domestic violence, especially newly arrived immigrants. Immigrants may not perceive domestic violence to be problematic in their relationships, as marital violence has been ingrained in their minds to be acceptable. Through informal and formal exposure to information about the detrimental impact intimate partner violence may cause, immigrant women may become empowered to speak out against the issue.

**Religious Involvement**

There has been mixed results regarding the role of religion and domestic violence. Newly arrived immigrants tend to engage in religious activities as a way to establish their social networks (Guest, 2003; Lee, 2007; Lee & Hadeed, 2009). Religious institutions in Asian American communities are not only a place for worship, but additionally a safe
haven where members can feel comfortable to disclose their problems (Cadge & Ecklund, 2007). In this way, religious involvement can act as an inhibitor of domestic violence. On the other hand, religious beliefs about preserving the family cause many immigrant women to remain in abusive relationships (Shiu-Thornton, Senturia, & Sullivan, 2005). Although religious institutions are supposed to be a place where anyone can feel safe, they can also act as an agent of female oppression, since religious teachings often focus on patriarchal beliefs. Religious institutions, which are typically operated by males, are meant to be a safe haven; however, it may not be for women suffering from abuse.

Religious teachings consist of oppressive messages toward certain groups such as women and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) communities. This can be problematic for victims of domestic violence because oppressive messages enforced by religious institutions serve to victimize and blame women while validating men’s use of violence in their relationships.

**Health Implications Associated with Domestic Violence**

Intimate partner violence and its impact to women’s health is a concern that needs to be addressed. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCICP) (2003), reported a cost of $44 million being spent annually to address health concerns stemming from intimate partner violence. Additional findings from NCICP’s study show 37% of emergency room visits are due to domestic violence.

Martial violence is often the leading cause of injuries for women between the ages of 15-44. Mental health studies show domestic violence drastically increases the
victim’s risk of depression, high anxiety, low self-esteem, learned helplessness, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, diabetes, migraine, insomnia, stomach ulcers, HIV/AIDS, and sexually transmitted diseases (Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997; Campbell, Kub, & Rose, 1996; McCauley et al, 1995; J.C. Campbell, 2002; Dutton 2009; Kaslow et al., 2002; Kaiser, 2003; Coker et al, 2002; Sutherland et al., 2002; Bent-Goodley, 2007). The effects of domestic violence experienced by victims may be exacerbated if victims do not seek assistance. For Asian American women, it may be difficult to receive medical services due to a lack of economic resources, language barrier, fear and shame in revealing the abuse, or being prevented by the abuser from seeking medical services.

Even when medical services are available, there is no guarantee that victims will receive the appropriate care. In an examination of primary care physicians, Chamberlain and Perham-Hester (2002), found physicians screened women for abuse related to intimate partner violence only when visible injuries were present, which can be problematic considering perpetrators can inflict harm onto victims without leaving any visible markings. Although physical injuries are the most visible indicators of intimate partner violence, other forms of abuse exist which can cause detrimental harm to victims.

After the physical wounds heal, victims can suffer from PTSD. Intimates partner violence dramatically increases an individual’s susceptibility to experience symptoms related to PTSD such as recurrent distressing dreams, recollections, persistent symptoms of arousal, difficulty falling or staying asleep, difficulty concentrating, hypervigilance, and disturbances that causes clinically significant distress or impairment (American
Psychiatric Association, 2000, p. 463-468). The severity of PTSD may vary according to the individual; however, the intensity of and physical proximity to the stressor increases an individual’s chances of possessing PTSD symptoms (APA, 2000, p.464). It’s common knowledge that it takes victims an average of 7 to 8 attempts before complete removal from an abusive relationship, which means victims remain in extremely close proximity to the abuser making PTSD an inevitable diagnosis for women experiencing intimate partner violence.

Depending on the severity and intensity of abuse, Dutton (2009, p. 215) found that “all types of intimate partner violence have been found to be associated with PTSD.” More recently, psychological abuse has been found to have greater contribution to PTSD than physical abuse and injury (Mechanic, Weaver, & Resick, 2008); which confirms the potential impact other forms of abuse may impose on survivors.

Victims of intimate partner violence often suffer in silence as perpetrators attempt to isolate them from family and friends. Coker et al. (2002, p. 471) reported that among victims, those with emotional support were significantly less likely to report poor mental health, anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms. Researchers also reported, “increased social support may enhance psychological well-being while enhancing coping skills and increasing the repertoire of assets with which a person constructs alternatives to the current abusive relationship” (p. 473).

Coker et al.’s (2002) study proved the importance of social support as a preventive strategy for health outcomes related to domestic violence. Unfortunately, for Asian American women who have been conditioned to remain quiet when it comes to
marital strife, acquiring social support from family or friends would require the victim to break the cardinal rule about keeping problems within the family. As previous studies have demonstrated, Asian American women may encounter hostility, criticism, and rejection rather than emotional support when disclosing their abuse to others (Yoshihama, 2000; Yoshioka & Dang, 2000, Thomas, 2000).
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The study investigates the shift in gender roles among Asian American women and domestic violence to gain a better understanding of the perceptions, attitudes, and knowledge Asian American women possess as a result of challenges to the traditional gender roles that has been reinforced by the Asian culture. By collecting data on beliefs, attitudes, and perception Asian American women hold about gender roles, methods can be developed as a means to educate men and women on the impact gender roles influences and contributes to attitudes toward intimate partner violence. This is specifically important for Asian American communities where there is resistance in acknowledging domestic violence as an issue that is pervasive and problematic within the community. This chapter explains what methods were used to conduct the study on evolving gender roles among Asian American women and domestic violence. It describes the design that was used for the study in addition to sampling methods, data collection instruments, data analysis, and the protection of human subjects.

Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design involving a mixed methods approach, which consisted of quantitative and qualitative methods. Open and closed ended questions were included along with case scenarios to allow the researcher to gauge participants’ knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions about domestic violence and gender roles.
The study was conducted through the administration of a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher in combination with the Revised Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse Scale (Yoshioka & Dinoia, 2000) to measure participants’ viewpoints and knowledge about intimate partner violence in conjunction with factors impacting participants’ actions involving situations where domestic violence was present.

**Sampling Procedures**

Due to the sensitive nature of the topic being researched, the researcher selected to use purposive and snowball sampling strategies to recruit participants. Purposive sampling and snowball sampling are effective in helping meet the challenges of collecting data on a sensitive topic from the targeted demographics as well as recruiting enough participants.

The researcher conducted a purposive sample by means of disseminating an invitation to 100 Asian American females between the ages of 18-35 to participate in the study in an attempt to attract 60 participants (see Appendix A). The invitation consisted of information about the purpose of the research along with an access code and a link to the secure web address of the consent form and questionnaire. In order to participate in the study, participants must consent to participate (see Appendix B), meet ethnicity and age requirements, and present the code prior to accessing the questionnaire. If participants declined to consent or do not meet the specified sampling criteria, participants were directed to the last page of the survey, which thanked the participants for their time.
The invitations were disseminated during the busiest hours on campus in the University Union; typically 11am-1pm during the second week of November 2010. Invitations were only given to females who met the criteria set forth by the researcher. For the purpose of avoiding conflict of interest, the researcher did not invite family, friends, colleagues, or anyone she is familiar with to participate in the research study. However, participants who are recruited are asked to pass the information along to anyone they felt may be interested in participating. All participants of the study received no direct compensation for their participation; although participants were informed about the impact their participation may have on improving knowledge and awareness about the impact of gender roles among Asian American women as it relates to domestic violence.

**Data Collection Instrument**

The survey consisted of 21 questions comprising of multiple choice, Likert-type response statements, and case scenarios (see Appendix C). Questions 1 and 2 examined participants’ perceptions regarding gender roles and responsibilities. Question 3 examined participants’ perception about factors contributing to domestic violence. Question 4 asked participants to rate the severity of common acts of domestic abuse. Questions 5 and 6 were from the Revised Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse Scale. The RAWA is a published scale developed by Yoshioka and Dinoia in 2000 by combining the Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse Scale and the Likelihood of Battering Scale developed by Briere in 1987 with items regarding the justified use of violence. The whole scale, including the items and scaling methods were publicly published in the Journal of Family Violence (2008, p.652). This study adopted and modified the scaling portion of the scale
by simplifying answer choices for participants to select. Question 7 consisted of 3 case scenarios. Part A of each scenario asked participants to share their immediate response to the situation, while Part B presented participants with factors that may increase, decrease, or have no effect on participants answer in Part A. In Part C, participants were asked if their answers in Part B would affect their response in Part A. Questions 8 through 21 consisted of demographic information about the participant such as participants’ age, ethnicity, marital status, and so forth.

Data Analysis

Previous research on domestic violence indicated a need for culturally competent practice in working with Asian Americans due to the uniqueness of the community. By analyzing the demographics of participants, a comparison can be made regarding the effects of independent variables such as age, religious affiliation, education attainment, and socioeconomic status toward participants’ perception of domestic violence. After collecting the required data, the data collected was entered into the computer utilizing the Predictive Analytics SoftWare (PASW) program. All information collected through Survey Monkey was extrapolated and transferred to PASW. The data were then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to generate summary and comparative findings. The analyses were also guided by the major research questions and the associated hypotheses.

Protection of Human Subjects

The Division of Social Work at California State University, Sacramento approved the Protection of Human Subjects application on September 23, 2010. The potential risk
for this study was minimal since participation was on a voluntary basis. Participants were given the option to not answer questions they felt uncomfortable with. Although some questions may invoke uncomfortable feelings in the participants, the level of discomfort was equivalent to the stress they would encounter on a daily basis. Furthermore, the survey consisted of hypothetical questions regarding domestic violence rather than direct questions about a participant’s personal experience with domestic violence; thus, unnecessary discomfort was minimized.

To further minimize the potential impact this study may induce in participants, participants were informed of the research’s purpose, risk, confidentiality, procedures, rights, benefits; along with the researcher’s contact information. Since the study involved an online questionnaire, participants must consent to participate prior to proceeding to the survey.

Participants were further informed that the information collected would be kept confidential to the degree permitted by the technology used. However, absolute guarantees cannot be given for the confidentiality of electronic data. As an added layer of protection, all information contained in the study was encrypted using a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) in which a secure connection between the server and the participants are set up. When using SSL, participants can be fairly sure that their data are safe from tampering since SSL can secure any connection between two points, and no individual monitoring the connection can gain unauthorized access to any sensitive information.

On account of the sensitive nature of the topic, all participants were fully informed of their rights and potential risks of the study prior to partaking in the study.
Moreover, participants were notified of their right to withdraw from the study at any given point of the study.

In consideration of participants’ rights to confidentiality and anonymity, participants’ Internet Protocol (IP) addresses will be masked from the researcher. Therefore, the researcher will not be able to delete a participant’s response should she choose to withdraw from the study after completing the online survey.
Chapter 4

FINDINGS

Considering the prevalence of domestic violence among Asian Americans, little attention and discussion has been paid to the issue. The goal of this research is to gather information on beliefs and attitudes of Asian American women about partner violence in an effort to use the knowledge gained from the research to develop dialogue to address and bring awareness to an issue that is shameful for victims, batterers, and the community. In order to develop prevention and intervention strategies to address violence among intimate partners, it is important to have a basic foundation of the beliefs and perceptions members who are most susceptible to violence hold as previous literature demonstrates women who typically view violence in a relationship as normal behavior are typically more prone to experience abuse; in addition to minimizing the abuse experienced. Furthermore, acts of violence are often attributed to power imbalance within a relationship. As Asian American women progressively become the primary wage earners of the family and better educated than their male counterparts, the shift in traditional gender roles may challenge men and women’s conditioned ideas of gender roles and responsibilities.

A review of literature about domestic violence among Asian Americans suggests Asian Americans who possess and maintain a traditional attitude towards gender roles are more vulnerable to either commit acts of violence toward their intimate partner or minimize acts of intimate partner violence inflicted upon them. This chapter will highlight the findings of the research such as demographics of participants, perceptions
and beliefs about acts of domestic violence and gender role responsibilities. This is a
descriptive study using a mixed methods approach to measure participants’ knowledge,
atitudes, and perceptions about domestic violence and gender roles. Seventy-two
participants completed the questionnaire out of 78 participants that consented. Thus, a
total of 72 questionnaires were included in this study.

**Demographics**

Participants in this study included Asian American women between 18 to 35 years
of age. Out of the total number of respondents (n=72), 58.3 % (n=42) were 24-29 years of
age, 23.6% (n=17) were 30-35 years of age, and 18.1% (n=13) were 18-23 years of age.
Of the Asian ethnic categories, the majority were Asian (n=43) followed by South East
Asian (n=20), South Asian (n=4), Other (n=5). Of the 5 respondents that selected other, 3
were Filipino, 1 was Chinese-Filipino, and 1 was Chinese-Vietnamese. Regarding marital
status, the majority of respondents (n=53) were single and never married, followed by
married (n=15), and separated or divorced (n=4). Of respondents, 79.2% (n=57) did not
have children while 20.8% (n=15) did.

Pertaining to current employment status, 47.2% (n=34) were employed full-time
(30 or more hours), 30.6% (n=22) were employed part-time (under 30 hours), and 22.2
(n=16) were unemployed. When participants were asked whether they felt economically
secure, 26.4% (n=19) strongly agreed, 58.3% (n=41) somewhat agreed, and 15.3%
(n=11) strongly disagreed.

The majority of participants, 61.1% (n=44) were born in the U.S. and 38.9%
(n=28) were foreign born. Of the 72 respondents, 73.6% (n=53) reported English as their
primary language spoken at home while 26.4% (n=19) reported the primary language spoken at home being their native Asian language. The native Asian languages spoken among the 19 participants included a Chinese dialect (n=7), Cantonese (n=5), Vietnamese (n=5), Hmong (n=1), and Hindi (n=1).

Seventy-two participants reported having at least a high school diploma or GED. Of the participants, 19.4% (n=14) possessed a high school diploma or GED. The majority 69.4% (n=50) were college graduates with 11.1% (n=8) possessing a professional degree. The majority of participants were Buddhists (n=25) followed by Atheists (n=19). Of the remaining 28 that answered, 15 were Catholics, 8 were Christians, and 5 identified as “Other.” Of participants that selected “Other”, 2 specified as Agnostics, 1 Sikh, 1 Hindu, and 1 Shaman.

Direct and indirect exposure to domestic violence is a common occurrence among participants of the study. Forty participants (55.6%) disclosed that they were a victim of domestic violence or knew of someone close to them that had been a victim of intimate partner violence. Twenty-two individuals responded that they themselves were never a victim or knew of someone who was a victim while 10 were unsure. Of the domestic violence cases participants were familiar with, 40 respondents acknowledged alcohol or drugs to have played a role in the domestic violence cases they were involved in or aware of. Seventeen participants replied that they did not think alcohol or drugs played a role while 15 were unsure of the role substances played in contributing to acts violence in a relationship.
For the majority of respondents, family (n=38) and friends (n=30) were people respondents would turn to for help if involved in an abusive relationship. Of the remaining 4 respondents, 3 would turn to law enforcement and 1 respondent replied that she would not turn to anyone for help. The low response rate for law enforcement as a support may partially be contributed to the respondent’s exposure to media’s representation of law enforcement in handling domestic violence cases. When respondents were asked where they received the most information about domestic violence, an overwhelming 40.3% (n=29) selected media, followed by family/friends (n=22), school (n=12), and personal experience (n=9).

Based upon analysis of the demographics collected from participants, the following was observed. An overwhelming proportion of participants were single Asian women with no children between 24-29 years of age with a college degree working full time. Participants felt economically secure, but only to a certain extent. The vast majority of participants was born in the United States and spoke English primarily at home. Evidenced by the pervasiveness of domestic violence, more than half of participants (n=40) disclosed that they were or knew of someone to be a victim of intimate partner violence. Moreover, the same number of participants (n=40) thought alcohol or drugs played a role in domestic violence cases they were familiar with.

**Gender Characteristics and Responsibilities**

Gender socialization has a significant impact on women’s perceptions of the characteristics and responsibilities a person possess. Participants were asked to select the top three characteristics that were often associated with men and women. Seventy-two
participants selected assertive, independent, and competitive as traits for men and emotional, nurturing, and talkative for women. Males in society are often perceived to be assertive, independent, and competitive in nature. On the other hand, women were perceived to have softer and feminine traits. Although some participants selected characteristics such as assertive, independent, and competitive for women, the overwhelming majority of women still held traditional perceptions of gender traits.

Considering the vast majority of participants were born in the United States and spoke English at home, these participants may still grow up in an environment where there is little deviation from a traditional upbringing where males and females are ascribed certain characteristics and conditioned to abide by certain cultural beliefs about gender.

Surprisingly, when it came to gender responsibilities in the home, more than half of respondents held an egalitarian view that meal preparation, household chores, grocery shopping, household finance, caring for children, and being the breadwinner should be shared responsibilities of both men and women. However, 65.3% (n=47) felt that men should be solely responsible for yard work; a task that is typically performed by men. Moreover, when it came to auto and household repair and maintenance, 81.9% (n=59) participants felt men should also be solely responsible for performing in a married relationship. Although 18-34.7% of women felt both men and women should share the responsibility, there was not 1 participant who felt women should be solely responsible for yard work and auto and house maintenance or repair. It can be inferred that women are uncomfortable with the nature of yard work and auto/house repairs typically performed by men in the same way that they are uncomfortable with men being primary
caregivers to children. Despite 77.8% (n=56) of participants who believe men and women should have shared responsibilities when it comes to caring for children, 22.2% (n=16) believed women should be responsible, while 0 participants felt men should possess the responsibility (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Marital Responsibilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meal preparation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household chores</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yard work</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery shopping</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto/house repair</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household finances</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breadwinner</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for children</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This finding suggests participants held an egalitarian view of gender responsibilities to the degree that women are not open to the idea of having men be the sole caregiver of children or the idea of performing duties such as yard work and auto/house repair. It is unknown whether women are not open to the idea due to intimidation, lack of familiarity, dislike, or lack of comfort with such concepts.
Contributing Factors of Domestic Violence

It is difficult to pinpoint a single cause of domestic violence as a combination of factors work together to create an environment that is more vulnerable to violence.

Participants were asked to select the three most common factors contributing to domestic violence in Asian American communities (see Table 2).

Table 2

Marital Status and Contributing Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing Factors</th>
<th>Single, Never Married</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Separated or Divorced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>40 (55.6%)</td>
<td>9 (12.5%)</td>
<td>4 (5.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealousy</td>
<td>31 (43.1%)</td>
<td>6 (8.3%)</td>
<td>3 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic hardship</td>
<td>27 (37.5%)</td>
<td>12 (16.7%)</td>
<td>2 (2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low self-esteem</td>
<td>25 (34.7%)</td>
<td>4 (5.6%)</td>
<td>2 (2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily stress</td>
<td>18 (25.0%)</td>
<td>7 (9.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provocation by partner</td>
<td>13 (18.1%)</td>
<td>4 (5.6%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>5 (6.9%)</td>
<td>3 (4.2%)</td>
<td>0 (0.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common contributing factors of domestic violence participants had the option of choosing consisted of daily stress, provocation by partner, economic hardship, depression, jealousy, anger, and low self-esteem. Over half of participants selected economic hardship (56.9%), jealousy (55.5%), and anger (73.6%) as the three most common contributing factors of domestic violence. Participants also felt low self-esteem (43.1%) and daily stress (37.5%) contributed to acts of violence in intimate partner
relationships, even though participants felt its impact may not be as significant as economic hardship, jealousy, and anger.

**Severity of Domestic Violence Acts**

Definitions of domestic violence vary from one person to another and influenced by such factors as socialization, education, experience, gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity. A list of acts often perpetrated by batterers onto victims was presented. The acts ranged from verbal, physical, financial, emotional, and psychological abuse. Participants were asked to rate the severity of the acts from very severe, moderately severe, and not severe. The majority of participants agreed the following acts were very severe: pinching, biting, pushing, shoving, and shaking victim (55.6%, n=40), slapping, punching, and choking the victim (88.9%, n=64), isolating the victim from family and friends (69.4%, n=50), preventing the victim from working (61.1%, n=44), withholding food, clothes, medication, and shelter from the victim (87.5%, n=63), and restricting the victim’s access to money (62.5%, n=45). Additionally, 43% (n=31) felt yelling, screaming, threatening, and calling the victim names were very severe while 50% (n=37) felt it was moderately severe. Regarding excessive checking up on the victim by batterers, 29.7% (n=22) felt it was very severe while 56.9% (n=41) felt it was moderately severe. Despite the broad spectrum of acts presented, it can be summarized that any and all acts of violence is moderately to very severe according to participants of the survey.

**Marital Violence Attitudes**

Batterers often blame victims for their acts of violence without taking accountability for their own behaviors. Utilizing the Revised Attitudes Toward Wife
Abuse Scale (RAWA), participants were asked under what circumstances a husband would be justified in hitting his wife, considering that participants were the husbands in the relationship. On a Likert scale, participants were asked to rate whether various acts were very likely, likely, somewhat likely, or not at all likely justified from the use of violence. An overwhelming proportion of participants reported that even if they were the husbands, there is no justification in engaging in acts of violence if their wife had sex with another man, refused to cook and keep the house clean, refused to have sex with them, made fun of them at a party, told friends that they were sexually pathetic, and nagged too much (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Situation Specific Approval of Violence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situations</th>
<th>Very Likely</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Somewhat Likely</th>
<th>Not Likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wife had sex with another man</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife refused to cook/clean</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife refused to have sex</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife made fun of me at a party</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife told friends...sexually pathetic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife nags too much</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the results display a lack of support for justified use of violence, 16.7% (n=12) participants felt that if the female engaged in infidelity, it is very likely that the abuse would be justified. It may be suggested that infidelity bruises a man’s ego while
challenging his authority. In turn, a man may attempt to reassert his authority through acts of violence. The need to re-establish power and control coupled with the anger from discovering the marital affair by their partner may create an unhealthy environment in which acts of violence are assumed to be an appropriate avenue of resolving marital conflicts.

Additionally, eight questions were presented to participants in an effort to assess participants’ endorsement of male privilege and perceived lack of alternatives. Participants were asked to select the level of agreement or disagreement with various statements. On a Likert scale, participants were asked to choose from strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Perceived Lack of Alternatives*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A man is never justified in hitting his wife</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife beating is grounds for divorce</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A wife should move out of the house</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A man should be arrested if he hits his wife</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 4 statements used to assess participants’ endorsement of male privilege, more than half of participants responded that they strongly agree with the following statements: a husband should have the right to discipline his wife, a man is ruler of his
home, a man is entitled to have sex with his wife whenever he wants, and some women seem to ask for beatings from their husbands.

In assessing participants’ perceived lack of alternatives, findings show 80.6% (n=58) strongly agree that a man is never justified in hitting his wife. More than half of participants strongly agreed that a wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her (n=45), a man should be arrested if he hits his wife (n=44), and wife beating is grounds for divorce (n=46).

**Responses to Domestic Violence**

Beliefs and perceptions often influence how people conduct their behaviors. In an attempt to determine how participants would react if they found themselves or knew of someone involved in an abusive relationship. Three scenarios were presented (see Appendix C). The first scenario assessed what participants would do when encountering their first experience with domestic violence. The second scenario examined participants’ actions when presented with a situation in which there was an increased in frequency and severity of violent acts. Scenario three ascertained the intervention method participants were willing to engage in. Each scenario contained three parts. In the first part, participants are asked what their immediate response would be from a list of options. The second part of the question asks participants to rate the likelihood of various factors in influencing their immediate response. Lastly, participants are asked if they would respond differently in the first part considering their responses in the second part.
Scenario #1 - First Encounter With Domestic Violence

Participants were asked what their immediate response would be given that they have been living with their boyfriend for five years. During that time, the boyfriend often screams at and puts the participant down for the way she dresses and the friends she spends time with. One evening, the boyfriend slaps the participant in the face during a heated argument. There are no children involved in the relationship. The participant is employed and is making a sufficient living. Based upon the hypothetical situation, 37.8% (n=28) would leave for the day, 26.4% (n=19) would contact family/friend, 19.4% (n=14) chose other, and specified that they would leave permanently (see Table 5). Six participants would fight back while 5 would actually contact law enforcement.

Table 5

First Encounter with DV: Immediate Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leave for the day</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact family/friend</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight back</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact law enforcement</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain quiet</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scenario #2 - Increased Acts of Domestic Violence

Participants were asked what their immediate response would be if they were born in a culture that does not believe in divorce and having to experience physical and financial abuse where the abuse are becoming more frequent. In this scenario, participants must take into consideration that if they leave the abusive relationship, their friends, family, and community will ostracize them. The majority (n= 23) would contact law enforcement immediately, 17 would contact family/friend, 8 would leave for the day, 3 would fight back, and 13 selected “other” and asked to specify their response. Of the 13 respondents, all 13 specified that they would leave permanently. When factors were introduced into the scenario to gauge the impact on participants’ responses, the vast majority of participants disclosed that factors such as children being involved (n=55), a lack of employment (n=32), possessing a support system (n=54), having a husband that cheated (n=47), and living in a culture where divorce is mostly accepted (n=48), were more likely to have an impact on their immediate response (see Table 6).

When participants were asked if they would respond differently, 47.2% would not respond any differently than they did, while 29.2% said “yes”, 19.4% were “unsure”, and 4.2% said “maybe”. Although a majority of participants would not respond differently than their immediate response, a large proportion would respond differently based upon the factors presented. It can be inferred that factors such as children are influential and play a significant role in participants’ immediate response to domestic violence.
Table 6

Factors Affecting Immediate Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>More Likely</th>
<th>Less Likely</th>
<th>No Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are children involved</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are unemployed</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have a support system</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your husband cheated</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce is mostly accepted in your culture</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scenario #3 - Intervention

Participants were presented with a scenario in which they had a friend who was experiencing emotional abuse by the husband. The friend is an unemployed individual with a lack of financial resources due to unemployment. The friend would like to remove herself from her unhealthy relationship, but is hindered by a lack of resources and support. Participants were asked for their response under the circumstances with consideration that participants dislike their friend’s husband. Of the options provided, 23.6% would try to allocate community resources for their friend, 22.2% would help the friend relocate, 20.8% would let the friend stay for a few days, 19.4% would listen and offer emotional support, 6.9% would tell the friend to contact law enforcement, and 6.9% chose “other” and specified that their actions would be dependent on their relationship with the friend. Moreover, when participants were questioned whether factors such as being friends with the husband would affect their response, more than half (51.4%) of
participants said it would not have an effect on their immediate response. Participants (43.1%) revealed that even if their friend provoked her husband, it would have no effect on their immediate response to assist in some manner. However, 37.5% expressed a decreased likelihood of assisting the friend if the friend was the person who provoked the situation.

A vast majority of participants (68.1%) would be more likely to intervene if children were involved while 25% said children would not have an impact on their actions. Participants provided an increased likelihood of their immediate response if the friend was employed (44.4%) while 40.3% would not be affected by the friend’s employment status.

In the situation in which participants’ friend engaged in infidelity, participants responded with a decreased the likelihood of their immediate response. Roughly 30% would not be affected by the friend’s infidelity to assist while 25% would feel more compelled to assist. Overwhelmingly, participants would not react differently than their immediate response considering the factors presented.

**Cross Tabulations**

In order to gain a more in-depth understanding on evolving gender roles and its impact on Asian American women’s perceptions about domestic violence, cross tabulations were conducted to compare demographics with participants’ responses. This study revealed that educational attainment is significant in determining whom Asian American women would turn to for immediate assistance (see Table 7). Asian American
women with higher education levels turned to family and friends for immediate help at a higher rate than those with less education.

Table 7

*Education Attainment and Immediate Help Crosstab*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Attainment</th>
<th>Immediate Help</th>
<th>Law</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than college</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College and higher</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When marital status was replaced with education attainment, results show 54% of single participants would turn to family for immediate help compared to 60% of married participants. On the other hand, married participants were more reluctant to seek assistance from family. Rather than family, married participants were likely to seek immediate help from friends (see Table 8). It can be inferred that once Asian American women marry, they may be uncomfortable turning to family for assistance, especially when it involves marital conflicts due to fears of shame upon the family’s name.

Furthermore, when an Asian American woman marries, she is considered the property of her husband. Thus, the problems Asian American women encounter after marriage is no longer a responsibility of her family. In turn, married Asian American women may
receive greater emotional support from friends during times of crisis without feelings of

guilt and shame about seeking assistance.

Table 8

*Marital Status and Immediate Help Crosstab*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Immediate Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single, Never Married</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced, Separated</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, chi square analysis was performed to identify whether a statistical

significance was present between where participants were born and whom participants

would seek immediate assistance from (see Table 9). Chi square analysis identified a

statistically significant difference between U.S. born and foreign born participants

pertaining to immediate assistance ($\chi^2=3.04$, df=1, $p<.10$). Participants born in the U.S.

were more willing to seek assistance compared to participants who were foreign born.

Table 9

*Born and Immediate Help Crosstab*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Immediate Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In U.S.</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside U.S.</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional crosstabs were conducted with educational attainment, religiosity, place of birth, and marital status with whether violence is likely to occur when the victim have sex with another man. As displayed in Table 10, more than half of participants feel abuse is not likely to be justified even when infidelity is involved, regardless of whether participants were a victim or not.

Table 10

**Been a Victim and Likelihood of Abuse Crosstab**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abuse Likely or Not If Sex With Another Man</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Been a victim or know a victim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When participants’ place of birth was compared to determine whether abuse is justified, chi square analysis found a statistically significant difference between foreign born and U.S. born participants in regard to attitudes about whether abuse is justified ($X^2=3.82$, df=1, $p<.10$). Participants born in the U.S. had higher levels of agreement that abuse is never justified compared to participants that are foreign born (see Table 11). It can be inferred that foreign born participants may bring with them traditional customs and beliefs that promote gender inequality and power imbalance whereas U.S. born participants have higher exposure to egalitarian views of gender and the promotion of
gender equality. The exposure that participants encounter in their daily lives can influence their formation on gender beliefs and attitudes.

Table 11

*Born and Abuse is Never Justified Crosstab*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In U.S.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside U.S.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

People are generally guided by their beliefs and perceptions to behave in a manner that is congruent with their beliefs. On the other hand, there are instances when discrepancies between a person’s beliefs and their actions are present. Findings from the study revealed a majority of women (n=58) believed a man is never justified in hitting his wife. When asked under what circumstances a husband would be justified in hitting his wife, only 41 participants believed that a husband would not be justified in hitting his wife while 31 participants felt somewhat likely to very likely in justifying the abuse if infidelity was involved. The study also revealed that 33 women were less inclined to assist if the friend cheated on her husband. It can be inferred that participants feel less obligated and engage in acts of victim blaming when acts of intimate partner violence result from the victim’s infidelity.
Findings from the study further reveal women were more likely to leave the relationship permanently if a support system is present. It can be inferred that support, whether emotional or financial, are an essential component to providing victims comfort and strength to leave an unhealthy relationship. Women with a support system may also possess the ability to perceive alternatives to the abusive relationship and be supported through the journey from being a victim to survivor of domestic violence. For women without a support system, the decision to remain or leave the abusive relationship can be a difficult one. Fear and uncertainties about the future are often enough to deter women from leaving their abusive relationship. For this reason, women with a lack of support and resources are prone to experience and remain in an abusive relationship at a higher rate than women with access to resources. Evidenced by results of the study, access to resources is one of the single most important factors in determining whether women will leave or remain in an unhealthy relationship aside from children. Thus, it’s imperative to provide victims with support when they are experiencing abuse, whether or not that abuse is a direct result of behaviors engaged in by victims.

Coinciding with past literature, the study found that children were a motivating factor for participants to intervene. Children are often perceived to be innocent bystanders in domestic violence relationships. As a result, adults are compelled to act even when they don’t necessarily desire to. Whether adults understand the potential impacts of domestic violence on children or not, it can be inferred that adults with knowledge about domestic violence cases are more apt to act simply because of the fear that batterers may also engage in acts of violence towards their children.
As indicated by participants of the study, the majority of participants believe men and women should share the responsibility of caring for children in a relationship; however, none of the participants believed that men should be the sole caregivers. Therefore, women will often subject themselves to remain in the abusive relationship unless they are able to leave with their children. On the other hand, children may act as a motivator for victims to leave an abusive situation in order to prevent harm to the children. Thus, it’s important to recognize the underlying factors that play a role in women’s help seeking behaviors and the effects gender roles and responsibilities may influence and contribute to women’s decision-making process in domestic violence situations.

For many participants, assistance from outsiders was secondary to family and friends. Participants were less likely to contact law enforcement for assistance in domestic violence situations unless physical acts of violence are occurring on a daily basis. Otherwise, participants typically rely on friends and family for support. The Asian culture’s emphasis on family secrecy and reputation may contribute to higher levels of dependence on family and friends for support during times of need rather than law enforcement.

Participants’ lack of reliance on law enforcement may be a direct result of media representation of law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Media outlets are often insensitive to the plight of victims and educating the public about the detrimental impact acts of violence on women have to women, families, communities, and society. When this happens, victims receive the message that they are to blame, which goes to
further prevent other potential victims from speaking out on the issue. Moreover, unless issues are brought to the forefront, the problems will continue to permeate through society.

**Summary**

Domestic violence does not have to be an acceptable component of any relationship or culture. When acts of violence are condoned, the problems associated with intimate partner violence will continue to perpetuate. Gender identity conditioned from an early age influence how women perceive the world along with how the world perceives women. Women’s perception of themselves may act as a line of defense from experiencing physical abuse by an intimate partner. Women who possess higher regard for themselves are less likely to condone acts of violence inflicted upon them. However, high levels of self-esteem as an individual factor cannot prevent domestic violence altogether. Based on the data collected, it is evident that a variety of factors may work collaboratively to decrease women’s vulnerability to experience intimate partner violence.

The information collected from this study provided the researcher with greater insight into the attitudes and beliefs of Asian American women regarding gender role and responsibilities; in addition to domestic violence. Despite possessing higher educational attainment and being economically secure, Asian American women still felt trapped between Eastern and Western culture. As revealed by this study, Asian American women believe violence is never justified. However, when victims are perceived to have broken culturally acceptable views of gender conduct, Asian American women were quick to
engage in victim blaming and endorse male privilege despite possessing the belief that a man is never justified in using violence against a woman.
Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The aim of the research was to examine public perceptions regarding gender roles and responsibilities in addition to attitudes toward domestic violence in order to determine whether factors such as socioeconomic status, educational attainment, acculturation status, age, religiosity, and marital status may have an impact on participants’ attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about domestic violence. The researcher hypothesized that evolving gender roles among Asian American women will not lead to a decrease in domestic violence among Asian American communities with the assumption that intimate partner violence will increase as a result of assertions by males to maintain power and control in the relationship. Despite a high level of educational attainment among participants in the study, more than half of participants knew of someone or were themselves a survivor of domestic violence.

Previous literature identified level of acculturation, educational attainment, and socioeconomic status to impact women’s perceptions and attitudes about domestic violence. Women with higher levels of acculturation, education, and socioeconomic status are less likely to endorse male privilege and gender inequality. Results from the study confirm findings from previous research. Women possessed an egalitarian perspective when it came to gender responsibilities with exceptions to yard work and auto/household maintenance and repair.

In addition, study findings confirmed with previous literature that children are the single most influential factor in determining the actions of women. When children are
involved, women will make the decision to leave or remain in the abusive relationship in the interest of the child. Women will typically subject themselves to abuse by remaining in an abusive relationship when children are present due to fears that the perpetrator will engage in violent acts against the children. Thus, most women will not leave an abusive relationship unless they can take their children with them.

Moreover, findings revealed participants were not supportive of male privilege. Participants felt men were never justified in hitting women. However, participants were less likely to assist if the abuse was a result of the victim’s infidelity. Participants’ reluctance to assist in situations where victims are believed to be challenging standards of appropriateness may be a direct result of victim blaming. Previous researchers found that victim blaming occurs in situations where women are unable to identify or sympathize with the victim. Victims that are unfaithful are perceived to be responsible for violence inflicted upon them. The result is consistent with literature that women who violate perceived acts of appropriate behavior are more likely to have their abuse be excused and justified by the abuser and society.

Contrary to past literature, the majority of participants in the study would seek help from family and friends; in addition to leaving the perpetrator. Since a large proportion of participants felt socioeconomically secure, a high response rate among participants in leaving an abusive relationship is not surprising as previous literature revealed socioeconomic status to play a significant role in determining whether women leave or remain with the abuser. Women who are financially secure are less dependent on
the abuser for financial support and therefore feel less constrained to remain in an abusive relationship due to limited financial resources.

**Emerging Findings**

Results of the study reveal Asian American women, despite acculturation status, educational attainment, age, religiosity, marital status, and socioeconomic status are experiencing acts of partner violence or had someone close to them be a victim of intimate partner violence. In fact, more than half of all participants were a victim or knew someone to be a victim of violence. It is evident by the findings that domestic violence is a common occurrence among Asian American women despite higher levels of educational attainment among participants and a belief in egalitarian roles between men and women.

Asian American women are becoming increasingly self sufficient and educated, challenging the traditional gender roles that Asian American men are the primary head of household. As a result, Asian American women view gender roles and responsibilities to be more egalitarian than traditional. However, egalitarian beliefs and perceptions do not always translate in certain circumstances. At times, Asian American women’s beliefs and actions were not congruent and may be contributed to such factors as life experience, cultural influences, knowledge, and personal beliefs about domestic violence.

In spite of education attainment, social and environmental factors still hold a degree of influence over participants’ actions, attitudes, and perceptions about the appropriateness of intimate partner violence. Contrary to the majority of female responses prohibiting violence, a large proportion would not uphold their beliefs when
presented with a situation in which the female is not faithful to her husband. Discrepancies between participants’ actions and beliefs may be contributed to constraints typically placed upon Asian American women to adhere to traditional gender roles from family while experiencing the pressures of adhering to egalitarian views from Western society. Encountering pressures from Eastern and Western cultures can leave Asian American women with feelings of confusion in deciding which cultural values and beliefs to adopt.

**Implications for Asian American Women**

Education about domestic violence is a prevention strategy that would be required if Asian American communities hope to prevent, if not eliminate, the frequency and occurrence of intimate partner violence. Asian American women must learn to recognize the detrimental impact domestic violence may impose on women, families, communities, and society; in addition to the role of culture in perpetuating the problem.

Asian cultural practices seek to enforce traditional gender role adherence and endorsement of male privilege. Asian American women must learn to recognize specific cultural practices that oppress rather than free women from being treated as second-class citizens. Simply because abuse is tolerated in the Asian culture does not mean members should adopt such practice, especially when abuse put women and children at risk for emotional, physical, and psychological trauma.

Education is pertinent to dispelling misconceptions about domestic violence. Victims are often under the misconception that they are responsible for their abuse. As a result, victims are hesitant in seeking assistance. Society needs to be supportive of
victims and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions, especially when their actions have the potential to cause death to another human being.

As a member of the majority class, society affords men privileges that women are denied. Acts of violence is neither a right nor privilege that men are given. Therefore, women must collectively work to challenge the misconception that men have the right to beat their wives under any circumstance. Furthermore, women must not condone acts of violence by men as appropriate behavior in situations where women are perceived to be engaging in acts of inappropriate behavior. Violence perpetrated against women as a means to resolve marital conflicts should never be excused or justified since there are more effective and less harmful ways to settle marital strife.

Education to combat domestic violence must involve a discussion about the role of media in perpetuating male privilege and minimizing acts of violence against women. Since media is a forum in which Asian Americans receive their information about domestic violence, it’s imperative for Asian Americans to analyze the messages that are presented to them. Additionally, information on potential signs of abuse are essential for Asian American women to recognize the early warning signs of an unhealthy and potentially abusive relationship.

Regardless of demographics, Asian American women are vulnerable to experience abuse because the culture tolerates abuse while preventing women from speaking out through the utilization of shame tactics that speaking out will bring shame to one’s family. Fear of shaming one’s family is a factor Asian American victims often encounter due to the emphasis on collectivism in the Asian culture. As a result, victims
subject themselves to suffer in silence for the sake of keeping the family’s reputation intact. Shame tactics are a tool for the culture to preserve traditional gender role adherence and oppression of women. Thus, Asian American women must encourage and support those that speak out against violence rather than engage in acts of victim blaming and shame because violence should never be accepted as an appropriate avenue for resolving issues in a relationship.

**Implications for Social Work**

An understanding of Asian American women’s perceptions and beliefs about traditional gender roles and domestic violence is crucial in developing effective prevention and intervention strategies that are culturally sensitive to the specific needs of the population affected by intimate partner violence. Practitioners with an understanding of culturally specific challenges victims face can assist victims in navigating through obstacles encountered when deciding to remain or leave an abusive relationship.

Although the majority of participants possessed high levels of acculturation, participants were still exposed to traditional cultural values. In spite of educational attainment and socioeconomic status achieved, Asian American women are still subjected and exposed to traditional messages endorsing male privilege. As a result, Asian American women’s beliefs about domestic violence and gender roles may not be consistent with their actions when presented with issues relating to domestic violence.

As social workers, it is important to confront the discrepancies between women’s beliefs and actions regarding domestic violence in a supportive manner. Social workers must assist clients in acknowledging and addressing the numerous factors that influence
the ways in which clients incorporate societal beliefs into their daily lives and the outcomes resulting from such actions. In respecting the experiences of clients, social workers must possess the ability to provide clients with unconditional positive regard and honor the stories being shared. When working with clients, social workers must possess the capacity to allow and support clients to make their own decisions, even when the decision is against the practitioner’s own belief system.

Intimate partner violence is a result of many contributing factors. Recognizing the underlying causes of domestic violence will allow social workers to address the issues more effectively while advocating for resources that may assist in mitigating the impact of domestic violence on victims. For Asian Americans, family is an important component and source of support. Any prevention and educational efforts by practitioners should involve family and friends of the victim. In doing so, victims are less likely to feel alienated and powerless in overcoming trauma incurred from intimate partner violence.

Women often remain in abusive relationships due to lack of resources and a lack of awareness about resources, which are available to assist women in leaving their abuser. Knowledge about community resources is imperative in alleviating fears and stress victims often develop when deciding whether to leave or stay. An awareness of available resources may be a motivator for women hesitating to leave their abusive because of a lack of supportive services.

The responsibility of social workers is to educate and advocate on behalf of those that are marginalized. Just as social workers must advocate for victims, they must also educate Asian American men on adopting better coping strategies to handle conflicts
without resorting to acts of violence. Asian American men and women are reluctant to seek assistance aside from family and friends due to stigma of being a victim or abuser. Practitioners must acknowledge the fear and commend clients that are courageous enough to seek assistance.

**Limitations**

This descriptive study is based on information collected from 72 participants between 18-35 years of age. The information collected may not reflect the general population or the experiences of Asian American women over 35 years of age. Since the identified population is Asian American women, the outcomes of the study may not be applicable to other ethnic populations in relation to domestic violence. Moreover, the purpose of this study is to assess the perceptions rather than personal experiences of participants in regard to intimate partner violence. Perceptions about domestic violence are not stagnant. Perceptions evolve according to personal experiences, environmental factors, socialization and circumstances. Thus, responses from participants may change frequently.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Domestic violence is a growing concern and the study of its causes and effects still requires more research. Although violence among intimate partners is a concern for society, violence among Asian Americans is of great concern due to the complexities that are contained in Asian cultural beliefs and its influences toward a passive resistance to domestic violence. This study examined Asian American women’s perceptions and beliefs about gender roles and domestic violence. However, this study did not explore
Asian American men’s perceptions and beliefs on gender roles and domestic violence. Asian American men and women are conditioned to follow gender specific beliefs; therefore, beliefs and attitudes about domestic violence and ascribed gender roles may differ between men and women. Conducting research into how men perceive acts of violence against women may provide researchers insight into men’s perceptions relating to evolving gender roles and the role of domestic violence as a result of changing dynamics within a relationship. Moreover, engaging in research to explore Asian American men’s reactions to cases of domestic violence will enable researchers to assess factors that may influence men’s decision to condone or prohibit acts of violence against women.

Due to differing definitions on domestic violence, it’s difficult to gauge what participants perceive to be acts of violence despite providing participants with general definitions of domestic violence prior to participating in the survey. Even more difficult are the variations in definitions about intimate partner violence as some definitions are broader and more inclusive of physical abuse than emotional and financial abuse. Moreover, cultural definitions of abuse may differ significantly, especially in Asian cultures where abuse is often minimized and normalized which provide Asian American males with the message that it’s acceptable to utilize violence as a mean to enforce and reassert power and control within the relationship when their power is being challenged. Thus, in order to educate and bring awareness to domestic violence, a clearer definition of domestic violence needs to be developed with consideration to the uniqueness of each culture.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Invitational Flyer

ASIAN AMERICAN FEMALE PARTICIPANTS NEEDED!!!

I cordially invite you to participate in a research study that partially fulfills the requirements for obtaining my Master’s in Social Work at CSU, Sacramento. I am researching Evolving Gender Roles Among Asian American Women and Domestic Violence in order to assess the perceptions and impact gender roles have on members of the Asian American community as it relates to domestic violence.

If you are an Asian American female between the ages of 18-35 or know of any Asian American females between the ages of 18-35, I respectfully request your participation in the online questionnaire. Please visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/asiandv. The access code 7870 is required to access the survey.

In order to safeguard your privacy, please make sure to use https and not http when accessing the link. If you would like, you can email me your email address and I will forward you the secure link if necessary.

Your consideration to participate in this study is appreciated. If you have any questions or comments regarding this study, please feel free to share them with me at jenny.m.chi@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Mui (Jenny) Chi
APPENDIX B

Letter of Consent

This research is being conducted by Mui (Jenny) Chi on

Evolving Gender Roles Among Asian American Women and Domestic Violence

Online Consent Form

The Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects at California State University, Sacramento has reviewed and approved the present research. The Committee on the Protection of Human Subject and Department of Social Work supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without consequence.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to gain knowledge regarding the evolving gender roles of Asian American women and domestic violence. By exploring the changing roles of Asian American women and domestic violence, the researcher’s aim is to identify the effects that evolving gender roles may have on Asian American women and their experiences with domestic violence. Through the study, service providers for domestic violence survivors can develop additional culturally competent intervention and treatment methods for perpetrators and victims of domestic violence. The researcher intends to survey Asian American females between the ages of 18 to 35 for this study.

Duration and Procedures

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes. The survey consists of demographic information, which will ONLY be utilized for statistical purposes. Should you decide to be a participant, you will be asked a series of questions regarding your perceptions about gender roles and domestic violence. The survey will also contain case scenarios in which you are asked to share what you would do in such situations.

Rights

As a participant, you have the right to refuse participation at any given point during the data collection process. You can decline to answer any question you may feel uncomfortable answering and still participate in the study. Your answers are valuable to understanding gender roles and domestic violence perceptions. You are strongly
encouraged to complete the survey to the best of your ability and as honestly and accurately as possible.

Risks/Discomfort

There may be minimal risks and discomforts involved with participating in this study. As the life experiences of participants vary, some questions may trigger minor psychological and emotional distress. In such an event, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Mental Health Department in Sacramento County at (916) 875-1000 or visit their office at 2150 Stockton Blvd, Sacramento 95823. Additionally, you can also contact Counseling and Psychological Services at CSU, Sacramento at (916) 278-6416 for assistance.

If outside of Sacramento County, you can contact your county’s Mental Health Department or Women Escaping A Violent Environment’s support and information hotline for referral to psychological services at (916) 920-2952 or 1-866-920-2952.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

This questionnaire is completely anonymous and there is no way in which you can be identified as an individual from the answers given. Your responses are confidential and will be kept securely, to be viewed only by the researcher and will be used only for the purpose of this research project. Although data collected will be stored in an encrypted format, please keep in mind that your responses will be kept confidential to the degree permitted by the technology used. No absolute guarantees can be given for the confidentiality of electronic data. By completing and submitting the anonymous survey, the researcher will be unable to remove anonymous data from the database should you wish to withdraw from the study.

Benefits

You will NOT receive any direct compensation for participating in the study; however your participation will contribute to research that may benefit others.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Chi at jenny.m.chi@gmail.com. You can also contact my thesis advisor Dr. Francis Yuen at (916) 278-7182 or email fyuen@csus.edu.

Before proceeding, please make sure the link is secure (https) and answer the following questions.

By completing this survey, you are agreeing to participate in the research.
☐ Yes, I agree to the above consent form and choose to participate.

☐ No, I do not agree to the above consent form and choose not to participate.

Are you an Asian American female?

☐ Yes, I am an Asian American female.

☐ No, I am not an Asian American female.

Are you between the ages of 18 to 35?

☐ Yes, I am between the ages of 18 to 35.

☐ No, I am not between the ages of 18 to 35.

Please enter the code provided: ______________
APPENDIX C
Survey Questionnaire

This is a research conducted by Mui (Jenny) Chi on
Evolving Gender Roles Among Asian American Women and Domestic Violence

Questionnaire

Questions developed in this survey aim to examine gender roles and domestic violence perceptions among members of the Asian community. Your participation is voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. Please keep in mind that you can omit any question(s) you are uncomfortable answering; although completion of the survey is respectfully requested. Thank You!

Domestic Violence can be defined as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.

1. For the following characteristics, please select the TOP THREE characteristics that are often associated with each gender in Asian American communities.

   | Assertive | Independent | Competitive | Jealous | Emotional | Nurturing | Talkative |
---|-----------|-------------|-------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
Men |          |             |             |         |           |           |           |
Women |        |             |             |         |           |           |           |

2. In a married relationship, who do you think should be the MOST responsible for the following duties?

   | Man | Woman | Both |
---|-----|-------|------|
Meal preparation |           |       |      |
Household chores |           |       |      |
Yard work |           |       |      |
Grocery shopping |           |       |      |
Auto and household maintenance/ repair-- |           |       |      |
Household finances |           |       |      |
Breadwinner |           |       |      |
Caring for children |           |       |      |
3. Which are the TOP THREE most common factors contributing to domestic violence in Asian American communities?

- [ ] Daily stress
- [ ] Provocation by partner
- [ ] Economic hardship
- [ ] Depression
- [ ] Jealousy
- [ ] Anger
- [ ] Low self-esteem

4. The following are acts often inflicted by the batterer onto the victim. Please rate the severity of the act.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>NS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pinching, biting, pushing, shoving, and shaking the victim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slapping, punching, and choking the victim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelling, screaming, threatening, and calling the victim names</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolating the victim from friends and family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive checking up on the victim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing the victim from working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding food, clothes, medication and shelter from the victim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricting the victim’s access to money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. If you were a husband, under what circumstances do you believe a husband would be justified in hitting his wife?

Select the response that best fits how you feel.

| VL=Very Likely, L=Likely, SM=Somewhat Likely, NL=Not At All Likely |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| If my wife had sex with another man. |     |     |
| If my wife refused to cook and keep the house clean. |     |     |
| If my wife refused to have sex with me. |     |     |
| If my wife made fun of me at a party. |     |     |
| If my wife told friends that I was sexually pathetic. |     |     |
| If my wife nags me too much. |     |     |

6. Please select the response that best represent how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

| SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| If my wife had sex with another man. |     |     |
| If my wife refused to cook and keep the house clean. |     |     |
| If my wife refused to have sex with me. |     |     |
| If my wife made fun of me at a party. |     |     |
| If my wife told friends that I was sexually pathetic. |     |     |
| If my wife nags me too much. |     |     |
A wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her. ------
A man is never justified in hitting his wife. ------------------
A husband should have the right to discipline his wife. ------
A man is ruler of his home. ---------------------------------
A man should be arrested if he hits his wife. ---------------
A man is entitled to have sex with his wife whenever he wants it. 
Wife beating is grounds for divorce. -----------------------
Some women seem to ask for beatings from their husbands. -----

7. For the following scenarios, select the answer that best represents what you might do. The first part will ask what you will do in the situation. The second part will ask you to determine whether the factors presented will increase or decrease the likelihood of your response.

Scenario 1: First Encounter with Domestic Violence

You and your boyfriend have been living together for the past 5 years. During that time, your boyfriend has never physically hit you, although he often screams at and puts you down for the way you dress and the friends you spend time with. One evening, your boyfriend slaps you in the face during a heated argument. You have no children together. You are currently employed and can support yourself on your salary.

a. What would be your immediate response? (Check one)
   - Remain quiet
   - Contact family/friend
   - Contact law enforcement
   - Leave for the day
   - Fight back
   - Other (specify) ______________

b. Would the following factors increase, decrease, or have no effect on the likelihood of your immediate response?

   (More Likely=ML, Less Likely=LL, No Effect=NE)

   There are children involved
   You are unemployed
   You have serious medical issues
   You are married
   Your boyfriend cheated on you
c. Based on your answers in B, would you respond differently from your choice in A?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐ Not Sure

Scenario 2: Increased Acts of Violence

You are born into a culture that DOES NOT believe in divorce. Your husband physically assaults you at least three times a week and choked you to the point of unconsciousness several times. Your husband controls the finances and restricts your access to funds, even though you are employed. You notice the physical assaults are becoming more frequent, to the point where the physical assaults are daily. If you remain in the relationship, the physical assaults will continue. If you leave the relationship, your family, friends, and community will refuse to associate with you. You have no children.

a. What would be your immediate response?

☐ Remain silent ☐ Contact family/ Friend ☐ Contact law enforcement

☐ Leave for the day ☐ Fight back ☐ Other (specify) __________________

b. Would the following factors increase, decrease, or have no effect on the likelihood of your immediate response?

(More Likely=ML, Less Likely=LL, No Effect=NE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>ML</th>
<th>LL</th>
<th>NE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are children involved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are unemployed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have a support system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your husband cheated on you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorce is mostly accepted in your culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Based on your answers in B, would you respond differently in A?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐ Not Sure

Scenario 3: Intervention

You are financially secure living in the suburbs with your husband and two teenage children. Over lunch, your friend confesses to you that her husband (who you dislike) screams at her on a daily basis and tells her she is nothing without him. In addition, he tells her to leave the relationship, but if she does, to make sure she never returns. Your friend has reached her breaking point and wants to leave the relationship, but is hesitant because she has nowhere to go and is unemployed.
a. What would be your immediate response?

☐ Tell her to contact law enforcement  ☐ Let her stay for a couple of days

☐ Listen and offer emotional support  ☐ Help her relocate

☐ Try to allocate community resources  ☐ Other (specify) _____________________

b. Would the following factors increase, decrease, or have no effect on the likelihood of your immediate response?

(More Likely=ML, Less Likely=LL, No Effect=NE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ML</th>
<th>LL</th>
<th>NE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You are friends with the husband</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She provoked her husband --------</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are children involved ------</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She was cheating on her husband -</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She is employed ----------------</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Based on your answers in B, would you respond differently in A?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Maybe  ☐ Unsure

Demographics

8. To which age group do you belong?

☐ 18-23  ☐ 24-29  ☐ 30-35

9. Ethnicity

☐ Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc.)

☐ South East Asian (Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Hmong, Mien, etc.)

☐ South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi, etc.)

☐ Other (specify) __________________

10. Marital Status

☐ Single, Never Married  ☐ Married  ☐ Separated or Divorced
11. Do you have any children?
   □ No  □ Yes

12. What is your current employment status?
   □ Unemployed  □ Part-Time (under 30 hours)  □ Full-time (30 or more hours)

13. Do you feel you are economically secure?
   □ Strongly Agree  □ Somewhat Agree  □ Strongly Disagree

14. Where were you born?
   □ In the U.S.  □ Outside of the U.S

15. What is your primary language spoken at home?
   □ English  □ Native Asian Language (specify: ______________________)

16. What is your highest level of education completed?
   □ Less than H.S.  □ H.S. Diploma/ GED  □ College Graduate  □ Professional Degree

17. What is your religious affiliation?
   □ Christian  □ Catholic  □ Buddhist  □ Atheist  □ Other

18. Have you or has anyone close to you ever been a victim of domestic violence?
   □ Yes  □ No  □ Not Sure

19. Do you think alcohol or drugs play a role in the domestic violence cases you are familiar with?
   □ Yes  □ No  □ Not Sure

20. If you found yourself in an abusive relationship, who would you turn to for help first? Check one.
    □ Family  □ Friend  □ Law Enforcement  □ No One  □ Other

21. Where do you get most of your information about domestic violence?
    □ Media  □ Personal Experience  □ Family/Friends  □ School

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE! YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED. HAVE A GREAT DAY!
REFERENCES


